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# Historical Notes on the Birds of Black Hawk County, Iowa

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BUCKLIN, MISSOURI

The purpose in writing this paper is to add to the small body of knowledge concerning the history of the Ellsworth College Museum. The author became involved in the museum shortly after beginning of his college career at Ellsworth. The products of his labor were first, organizing the museum, second, opening the museum to the public, and last, to write a paper concerning the history of the museum.

The collection of birds and bird eggs at Ellsworth is by far the most fantastic of the collections in the museum, and, like the other collections there was no data on the specimens and there was little about the collectors. All of the known information about the collectors is condensed in the paper the author wrote in 1968. This paper is here being presented as the forward. It is added only to help the reader who is not familiar with the museum to better understand why the author bothered to record the scattered notes on the birds of Black Hawk County by George D. and Morton E. Peck.

The author stumbled across the first reference, Anderson, purely by chance. Anderson led the way to the others. This information has before this time not been known to the people involved with the museum today. That is the reason the author feels the need to add this information to the available literature on the museum. As far as is known at the present time, these are the only direct quotes by the Pecks on the birds of Black Hawk County at La Porte City, Iowa.

My first and main source of information on the birds sighted by the Pecks was a work by Rudolph M. Anderson, "Birds of Iowa," presented to the Davenport Academy of Sciences on August 11, 1906, and published in the **Proceedings of the Davenport Academy of Sciences**, volume XI, for the years 1906-7, and published in 1907. This work also referred to other sources which had reference to the work of the Pecks. Anderson lists, among his contributors for Black Hawk County, Morton Peck. "Professor Morton E. Peck, Department of Biology, Ellsworth College, Iowa Falls, Iowa, lists 233 species from both his father's observations and his own, covering a period rather more than thirty years (LaPorte City)".

Anderson also lists for Black Hawk County Professor G. W. Walters of Iowa State Normal School who has reported "165 species observed from 1895 to 1904 (Cedar Falls)," and "Charles K. Salisbury, 161 species, restricted to Lincoln Township (near Reinbeck)."

I should state here that when Anderson considered a common species he simply stated that it was common, without going into any detail about sightings. So there are no doubt species that have been sighted by the Pecks to which Anderson did not refer. Included are references to Walters and Salisbury for those individuals who are interested in the birds of Black Hawk County itself, as well as for those who are interested in the present University of Northern Iowa Museum. All of Anderson's references to the Pecks will be listed in the bibliography.

One of the best firsthand sources of information by the Pecks is the **Iowa Ornithologist** in the issues contemporary to the Pecks' presence in Iowa. The **Iowa Ornithologist** was published by the Iowa Ornithological Association, Salem, Iowa. Several of the articles by Morton E. Peck are of considerable length.

There are two more excellent second-hand sources of information on the Pecks' bird observations. First is a book by W. W. Cooke, **Report on Bird Migrations in the Mississippi Valley in the Years 1884-1885**, United States Department of Agriculture, Division of Economic Ornithology, Bulletin No. 2, 1888. Second is a work by Philip A. DuMont, **A Revised List of the Birds of Iowa**, University of Iowa Studies, 1934.

All scientific names that follow have been updated according to **The American Ornithologists' Union Check-List of North American Birds**, 1957, and subsequent supplements.

(Editor's note -- To shorten the article, bibliographic references are numbered and the number and page reference used to indicate the source of each record.)

List and comments on birds sighted at La Porte City by the Pecks with additions for the rest of Black Hawk County:

**Gavia immer** (Brunnich) Common Loon -- "Professor Walters reports the loon as an 'occasional summer visitant' in Black Hawk County." (1 - p. 151) "... LaPorte City, Iowa, (lat. 48 degrees 18'). March 31," (1885). (3 - p. 54)

**Gavia stellata** (Pontoppidan) Red-throated Loon -- "... rare winter or fall visitor." (Peck) (1 - p. 151) "Morton E. Peck, Oct. 12, 1932, wrote that he had never seen the Red-throated Loon in Iowa." (4 - p. 17)

**Podiceps auritus** (Linnaeus) Horned Grebe -- In Black Hawk County an "occasional summer visitant, nesting; specimen mounted by myself in Iowa State Normal School museum." (Walters) (1 - p. 149)

**Aechmophorus occidentalis** (Lawrence) Western Grebe -- "Two or three accidental specimens noted in Black Hawk County in early spring. Recorded by my father, George D. Peck, the last time about seventeen years ago. The specimens were not taken but his familiarity with Iowa birds is such that I think the record trustworthy." (Morton E. Peck) (1 - p. 148)

**Podilymbus podiceps** (Linn) Pied-billed Grebe -- "Its arrival was noted at LaPorte City, Iowa, April 1," 1885. (3 - p. 54)

**Fregata magnificens** (Mathews) Magnificent Frigate-bird or Man-o-war Bird -- "M. E. Peck (*Iowa Ornithologist*, ii, 2, 1896, 34) reports the occurrence of a specimen at LaPorte City, Iowa." (1 - p. 163)

**Phalacrocorax auritus** (Lesson) Double-crested Cormorant -- Sighted "... at LaPorte City, Iowa, March 31," 1884, and April 2, 1885. (3 - p. 59)

**Ardea herodias** (Linn.) Great Blue Heron -- George Peck reported that the Great Blue Herons migrated through LaPorte City on March 24, 1884. (3 - p. 81)

**Lenocoryphus thula** (Molina) Snowy Egret -- "Morton E. Peck wrote that he saw the Snowy Egret in Black Hawk County on two occasions. A specimen was secured about 1885 and was mounted by his father, George D. Peck." (4 - p. 24) Anderson quoted the Pecks as saying the Snowy Egret was "an uncertain late summer and fall migrant from the South; young birds wander northward probably as soon as fledged. Sometimes (it) appears in considerable numbers in Black Hawk County. One spring visitor, probably accidental, recorded." (1 - p. 297)

**Nycticorax nycticorax** (Linn.) Black-crowned Night Heron -- "On April 5 they appeared at LaPorte City, Iowa." (George Peck, 1884) (3 - p. 84).

**Olor buccinator** (Richardson) Trumpeter Swan -- In Black Hawk County "rare migrant; a specimen mounted by myself in museum of Iowa State Normal School." (Walters) (1 - p. 191)

**Branta bernicla** (Linn.) Brant -- "Frequent migrant" in Black Hawk County. (1 - p. 189) (probably an error - 4 - 158 - ed.)

*Chen caeruleaceus* (Linn.) Blue race, Lesser Snow Goose -- "A regular and not uncommon migrant across Black Hawk County. Sometimes alights in corn field in the spring migration." (Peck) (1. - p. 184)

*Chen caerulesceus hyperborea* (Pall.) Lesser Snow Goose -- Cited as an "occasional migrant" by Professor Walters and as a "frequent migrant" by Peck. (1. - p. 181)

*Anas platyrhynchos* (Linn.) Mallard -- In Black Hawk County the Mallard was termed a "common migrant" by Peck, a "common summer resident, nesting." by Walters, and an "abundant summer resident; nesting" by Salisbury. (1. - p. 166) Cooke in *Bird Migrations in the Mississippi Valley* quoted Peck about the migrations of Mallard in waves in the spring of 1885. He states "Another wave occurred in Iowa March 14. it was noted at Iowa City and LaPorte City, Iowa. . ." (3. - p. 64)

*Anas rubripes* (Brewster) Black Duck -- Morton Peck stated the Black Duck "has been known to occur 2 or 3 times in the county." Salisbury called it a "rare transient" and Walters referred to it as a "rare migrant" stating that there was a "specimen in the Iowa State Normal School Museum." (1. - p. 167)

*Anas strepera* (Linn.) Gadwall -- In the spring of 1885 Gadwall were sighted at "Des Moines and LaPorte City, Iowa, April 1 and 3." (3. - p. 65)

*Anas acuta* (Linn.) Pintail -- From March 11 to March 14 the Pintail was "noted from . . . LaPorte City, Iowa. . ." (3. p. 68)

*Anas cyanoptera* (Vieillot) Cinnamon Teal -- Professor Walters stated that the Cinnamon Teal is a Black Hawk County "migrant." He said a "specimen mounted by myself is in the Iowa State Normal School Museum." (1. - p. 170) However, in 1934, DuMont wrote, "Walters stated that the Black Hawk County specimen was never in the museum of the State Teachers' College, but that it was mounted for a hunter." (4. - p. 35)

*Spatula cyleata* (Linn.) Shoveler -- "The regular advance was reported from Des Moines and LaPorte City March 21 and April 1, " " 1885. (1. - p. 171, 3. - p. 68)

*Aix sponsa* (Linn.) Wood Duck -- Morton Peck stated that "formerly it was the most common of the ducks heading in the valley of the Cedar. In late summer the ponds and small streams swarmed with the young birds. Within the past ten years they have almost ceased to breed in Black Hawk County. Rare in Linn and Hardin counties." (1. - p. 173) The date of this statement would be sometime shortly before 1906.

In the spring of 1885 the Wood Duck arrived at LaPorte City on March 26. (3. - p. 69)

*Aythya americana* (Eyton) Redhead -- In the spring of 1884 the Redhead arrived at LaPorte City (latitude 48 degrees 18') on March 22. (3. - p. 70)

*Aythya marila* (Linn.) Greater Scaup -- Like, and probably with, the Redhead, the Scaup arrived at LaPorte City on March 22, 1884. (3. - p. 71) (prob. Lesser - ed.)

*Bucephala clangula* (Linn.) Common Goldeneye -- Morton Peck stated that the Goldeneye was "scarce in Black Hawk County but it could be found," in winters and early spring on the Cedar. (1. - p. 177) "In migration in the spring of 1884 the Common Goldeneye reached LaPorte City, Iowa, March 16 . . . . In the spring of 1885, migrants were noted at LaPorte City, Iowa, March 30." (3. - p. 72)

*Bucephala albeola* (Linn.) Bufflehead -- The Buffleheads passed through LaPorte City of March 30 in 1885. (3. - p. 73)

*Melanitta deglandi* (Bonaparte) White-winged Scoter -- In Black Hawk County "one specimen (was) taken some years ago and a few others observed." (1. - p. 180)

*Melanitta perspicillata* (Linn.) Surf Scoter -- DuMont, 1934, noted "a female, collected at Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, is in the museum of the Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls." (4. - p. 42) Morton Peck stated that a specimen "has been taken at . . . LaPorte City, Iowa." (3. - p. 73) *The Iowa Ornithologist*, volume II, no. 2, January, 1896, credits this last specimen to George D. Peck.

*Oidemia nigra* (Linn.) Common Scoter -- Morton Peck stated that "a casual specimen" was taken in Black Hawk County some years ago. (1. - p. 179) Cooke calls the Common Scoter the Black Scoter and states, "it has been found at . . . LaPorte City, Iowa." (3. - p. 73)

*Oxyura jamaicensis* (Gmelin) Ruddy Duck -- "A scarce but regular migrant" in Black Hawk County. (Peck) Walters termed the Ruddy Duck a "rare migrant." (1. - p. 181)

*Lophodytes cucullatus* (Linn.) Hooded Merganser -- "This species formerly breed quite frequently in Black Hawk County, but no nest has been known there for many years. Has been known to breed in the same tree with the Wood Duck." (Peck) (1. - p. 165) It passed through LaPorte City March 17 in the spring migration of 1884. (3. - p. 61)

*Mergus serrator* (Linn.) Red-breasted Merganser -- Morton and Harry Peck reported the migration of the Red-breasted Merganser through LaPorte City, Iowa, March 25, 1885. (1. - p. 164, 3. - p. 61)

*Cathartes aura* (Linn.) Turkey Vulture -- "Morton E. Peck says it formerly bred quite frequently in Black Hawk County in hollow trees and more recently on the palisades of the Cedar River in Linn County, now seldom seen except in migration." (1. - p. 241)

*Elanoides forficatus* (Linn.) Swallow-tailed Kite -- Anderson said, "Morton E. Peck writes me that it 'once bred regularly in Black Hawk and Benton counties where a number of sets of eggs were taken by George D. Peck, the last in about 1877. At present it rarely if ever appears in the county.'" (1. - p. 243)

*Ictinia mississippiensis* (Wilson) Mississippi Kite -- Salisbury sighted the Mississippi Kite near Reinbeck. He gives this account: "I remained over half an hour within twenty feet of the bird when it was resting on a post in hedge, so that identification is positive." (4. - p. 52)

*Accipiter cooperi* (Bonaparte) Cooper's Hawk -- Sighted at LaPorte City April 26, 1885. (3. - p. 114)

*Buteo jamaicensis* (Gmelin) Red-tailed Hawk -- "In the spring of 1885 the Red-tailed Hawk was seen at LaPorte City, Iowa, March 3. . . ." (3. - p. 115)

*Buteo jamaicensis krideri* (Hoopes) Krider's Hawk (Subspecies of Red-tailed Hawk) -- "This ill-defined variety not rare in Hardin County, where the type is especially abundant." (M. E. Peck) (1. - p. 247)

*Buteo swainsoni* (Bonap) Swainson's Hawk -- Sighted at LaPorte City March 23, 1885. (3. - p. 116)

*Buteo platypterus* (Vieillot) Broad-winged Hawk -- Sighted at LaPorte City, March 30, 1885. (3. - p. 116)

*Buteo jamaicensis harland* (Audubon) Harlan's Hawk (Subspecies of Red-tailed Hawk) -- Walters termed Harlan's Hawk a "Migrant" in Black Hawk County. (1. - p. 248)

*Buteo regalis* (Gray) Ferruginous Hawk -- In Black Hawk County a "rare winter visitant; specimen in museum of Iowa State Normal School." (Walters) (1. - p. 252)

DuMont, 1934, noted "A female taken at Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, June 25, 19011, is in the collection of Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls." (4. - p. 52)

*Aquila chrysaetos* (Linn.) Golden Eagle -- Morton and Harry Peck reported a Golden Eagle from LaPorte City, Iowa, March 15, 1885. (3. - p. 117)

*Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (Linn.) Bald Eagle -- "M. E. Peck states that is bred sparingly in Black Hawk County thirty-five years ago." (1. - p. 253)

*Pandion haliaetus* (Linn.) Osprey -- The Pecks reported the Osprey at LaPorte City on April 15, 1885. (3. - p. 120)

*Falco mexicanus* (Schlegel) Prairie Falcon -- DuMont, 1934, wrote "Morton E. Peck, now of Salem, Oregon, wrote October 12, 1932, saying: 'My father, George D. Peck, collected a specimen of Prairie Falcon in Black Hawk County more than fifty years ago. It was identified and purchased by someone in the East, but I do not know by whom.'" (1. - p. 254, 4. - p. 54)

*Falco peregrinus* (Tunstall) Peregrine Falcon -- Morton Peck stated that the Duck Hawk was "a regular but infrequent migrant in Black Hawk County, where it once bred sparingly, on one occasion occupying a deserted nest of the bald eagle." (1. - p. 255)

*Falco columbarius* (Linn.) Merlin -- Anderson reported "an accidental visitor has been recorded from LaPorte City, Iowa." (Cooke, p. 119) Morton Peck noted that this specimen was taken by George D. Peck. (1. - p. 258) DuMont, 1934, stated, "Morton Peck (also) wrote that the specimen taken by his father, George D. Peck, in Black Hawk County, had been disposed of many years ago, to someone in the East." (4. - p. 55)

*Grus americana* (Linn.) Whooping Crane -- "In the spring of 1885 the Whooping Crane appeared at LaPorte City, March 30 . . ." The Pecks termed it a "scarce migrant." (1. - p. 201) During the spring migration of 1885 the Whooping Crane reached LaPorte City on March 30. (3. - p. 85)

In personal correspondence between Mrs. M. E. Peck and Mr. William H. Schmidt of January 17, 1963, Mrs. Peck recalled, "In my young days both the Whooping Crane and the Sandhill Cranes were quite common. In the early spring I have seen the great white cranes dancing in last year's cornfields." In correspondence between Mrs. Peck and Mrs. Law (December 16, 1962), Mrs. Peck also recalls the circumstances of the capture of the Ellsworth College specimen. "It was early spring and the last year's corn stalks were standing more or less up, and there were the big, stately birds. We were all agog, for the cranes were doing a few fancy mystical steps. The result, the bird was killed and as they drove to the house I looked in the wagon box and the specimen seemed to fill the whole rear of the wagon." (12. - p. 7)

*Rallus elegans* (Aud.) King Rail -- Morton Peck stated that the King Rail was a "common summer resident" in Hardin County. This information was probably gathered at the time when he taught at Ellsworth College. (1. - p. 206)

*Porzana carolina* (Linn.) Sora -- Sighted during the spring migrations at LaPorte City on April 16, 1884, and May 1, 1885. (3. - p. 87)

*Coturnicops noveboracensis* (Gmel.) Yellow Rail -- The Yellow Rail "has been taken once in Black Hawk County. The bird never seems to take flight when pursued but may be captured with the hands." (Peck) (1. - p. 208)

*Laterallus jamaicensis* (Gmel.) Black Rail -- A "rare migrant: one specimen mounted." (Walters) (1. - p. 209)

*Porphyryla martinica* (Linn.) Purple Gallinule -- "Morton E. Peck reports: 'One specimen from Black Hawk County, an estray from the South.' (1. - p. 209) DuMont, 1934, adds more to this data. "A specimen taken by Morton E. Peck in Black Hawk County was listed. Peck recently wrote that this bird was observed, not collected. He stated that he did not doubt the correctness of the identification."

" (4. - p. 155)

*Gallinula chloropus* (Licht) Common Gallinule -- (This is a Gallinule which is not listed, either by its scientific name nor its common name. It is added in hope that interested persons may find the bird's status.)

Walters called the bird a " 'rare migrant.' " Peck said it was " 'apparently a regular visitor to the state but rare. A set of eggs was taken many years ago in Black Hawk County by George D. Peck, when it was found in company with Coots.' " (1. - p. 210)

*Fulica americana* (Gmel.) American Coot -- The Coot was " 'formerly a not rare breeder in Black Hawk, but now almost unknown except during migrations.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 211) On April 2, 1885 the American Coot passed through LaPorte City on its spring migration. (3. - p. 88)

*Charadrius semipalmatus* (Bonap.) Semipalmated Plover -- (It) " 'appears to be generally distributed over the states in spring and fall migrations, but not very abundant. Usually seen in small flocks in company with Killdeer, Spotted Sandpipers and other waders.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 229)

*Charadrius vociferus* (Linn.) Killdeer -- Two observations were made by the Pecks of the Killdeer migrating through LaPorte City on March 14, 1885. (3. - p. 99)

*Philohela minor* (Gmel.) American Woodcock -- "Morton E. Peck says it was " 'once a common migrant in most wooded localities: now quite scarce. Bred frequently in Black Hawk County twenty years ago, where on April evenings in low woods the peculiar nesting call was no uncommon sound.' " (1. - p. 214)

*Totanus melanoleucus* (Gmel.) Greater Yellowlegs -- Passed through LaPorte City, March 11, 1884. (3. - p. 95)

*Ereunetes pusillus* (Linn.) Semipalmated Sandpiper -- Sighted in Black Hawk County by Walters. (1. - p. 220)

*Limosa haemastica* (Linn.) Hudsonian Godwit -- " 'A rare spring migrant in Black Hawk County, where several specimens have been taken.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 221)

*Larus argentatus* (Pontoppidan) Herring Gull -- Sighted in Black Hawk County by both Peck and Walters. (1. - p. 154)

*Larus delawarensis* (Ord) Ring-billed Gull -- Sighted in Black Hawk County by Peck. (1. - p. 154)

*Sterna hirundo* (Linn.) Common Tern -- The Common Tern was referred to as a " 'common transient' " by Salisbury at Reinbeck in Black Hawk County. (1. - p. 158)

*Chlidonias niger* (Linn.) Black Tern -- On " 'May 15, (1884) it was passing over LaPorte City, Iowa, in large flocks.' " (George D. Peck) (3. - p. 58)

*Ectopistes migratorius* (Linn.) Black Tern -- On " 'May 15, (1884) it was passing over LaPorte City, Iowa, in large flocks.' " (George D. Peck) (3. - p. 58)

*Ectopistes migratorius* (Linn.) Passenger Pigeon -- Anderson in 1905 quotes George Peck as saying, "Our latest record is eighteen years old "

*Coccyzus americanus* (Linn.) Yellow-billed Cuckoo -- During the spring migrations " 'it came to LaPorte City, Iowa, on May 27, 1884.' " (3. - p. 125)

*Tyto alba* (Scopoli) Barn Owl -- Morton Peck wrote that he found two nests " 'in hollow trees in Black Hawk County,' " while Salisbury and Walters called the bird a " 'rare resident.' " (1. - p. 259)

*Strix varia* (Barton) Barred Owl -- "A very early record is given by Bendire: 'the type specimen (egg) No. 20633, Bendire collection, from a set of these, was taken by Mr. G. Peck in Black Hawk County, Iowa, March 2, 1878. It is figured on page xii, fig. 4. (Life Histories of North American Birds, 336).' " (1. - p. 261)

*Caprimulgus vociferus* (Wilson) Whip-poor-will -- Reported at LaPorte City,



Iowa, spring 1885. (3. - p. 135)

*Archilochus colubris* (Linn.) Ruby-throated Hummingbird -- The Pecks reported this Hummingbird in the spring migrations on May 15, at LaPorte City. (3. - p. 140)

*Megaceryle alcyon* (Linn.) Belted Kingfisher -- In 1884 George Peck reported the Belted Kingfisher at latitude 42 degrees 18' (LaPorte City) on March 22 and 23. In 1885 Morton and Harry Peck reported the bird at LaPorte City on March 26. (3. - p. 126)

*Colaptes auratus* (Linn.) Common Flicker -- The Pecks wrote that " 'At LaPorte City, Iowa, it was more common during the winter of 1884-85 than ever before.' " (3. - p. 133)

*Calaptes auratus cafer* (Gmel.) Red-shafted Flicker (Subspecies of Common Flicker) -- " 'A pair reported from Black Hawk County by Mr. Field of the State Normal. I think this were taken last fall -- 1903.' " (Peck). " 'In September, 1897, I found the remains of a specimen that had been killed.' " (Peck, Hardin County) " 'A pair (was) observed in Tama County about twenty years by Mrs. E. M. Poyneer, the record is perfectly reliable.' " (Peck, Tama County) (1. - p. 279)

*Dryocopus pileatus* (Linn.) Pileated Woodpecker -- A " 'rare migrant' " in Black Hawk County. (Peck) (1. - p. 276)

*Centurus carolinus* (Linn.) Red-bellied Woodpecker -- " 'Nesting records are rare in Iowa, but Morton E. Peck states that it breeds rather infrequently in Black Hawk County and is a frequent winter resident.' " (1-p. 277) " 'Mr. Peck writes from LaPorte City, Iowa (latitude 42 degrees 18') that a few breed, but that most of them migrate northward.' " (3-p. 132)

*Sphyrapicus varius* (Linn.) Yellow-bellied Sapsucker -- " 'It has been known to breed at LaPorte City, Iowa (Latitude 42 degrees 18'). ' " (3-p. 129, 1-p. 175)

*Tyrannus tyrannus* (Linn.) Eastern Kingbird -- Reported at LaPorte City (migration), April 22 and 23, 1885. (3-. 142)

*Sayornis phoebe* (Latham) Eastern Phoebe -- Arrived at LaPorte City March 23 and 24, 1885. (3.-p. 149)

*Empidonax flaviventris* (Baird and Baird) -- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher -- " 'A regular and common migrant and rare breeder in Black Hawk County.' " (1.-p. 287)

*Empidonax virescens* (Vieillot) Acadian Flycatcher -- Reported by Salisbury and Peck. Peck sites it as " 'infrequent.' " (1.-p. 288)

*Empidonax minimus* (Baird and Baird) Last Flycatcher -- An " 'infrequent breeder,' " in Black Hawk County, " 'mostly in open woods or about homes.' " (1.-p. 290)

*Nuttallornis borealis* (Swainson) Olive-sided Flycatcher -- Reported in Black Hawk County by Morton Peck. (1. - p. 287)

*Iridoprocne bicolor* (Vieillot) Tree Swallow -- A " 'common migrant (but a) rather rare breeder' " in Black Hawk County. (Peck) (1. - p. 335)

*Progne subis* (Linn.) Purple Martin -- Arrived at LaPorte City, Iowa, on April 5 (1884 or 1885). (Peck) (3. - p. 226)

*Pica pica* (Linn.) Black-billed Magpie -- "Morton E. Peck writes: 'A specimen was taken in a steel trap in Black Hawk County by a trapper who was perfectly familiar with the bird of the West. This is an old record, perhaps thirty years old, but I am sure it is quite authentic.' " (1. - p. 294)

*Parus bicolor* (Linn.) Tufted Titmouse -- Morton Peck said the species was " 'accidental' " in Black Hawk County. Walters stated, " 'one specimen (collected) in May (of) 1900 (is) in (the) Iowa State Normal School Museum.' " (1. - p. 374).

*Sitta canadensis* (Linn.) Red-breasted Nuthatch -- Morton Peck said it is " . . . only reported as tolerably common." " (1. - p. 373). He reported a sighting during migration on April 19, 1885, at LaPorte City. (3. - p. 276)

*Mimus polyglottos* (Linn.) Mockingbird -- Walters sighted one " 'in May (of) 1898, at Cedar Falls,' " Iowa. Peck termed the species " 'accidental.' " (1. - p. 366).

*Turdus migratorus* (Linn.) American Robin -- George Peck stated that in 1884 " ' . . . they were common all winter . . . , ' " at LaPorte City. (3. - p. 286).

*Poliophtila caerule* (Linn.) Blue-gray Gnatcatcher -- Anderson quoted Morton Peck as saying that the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was a "frequent breeder in Black Hawk County, which seems to be near their northern limit." (1. - p. 377). Cooke found that "the most northern record received in 1884 was from LaPorte City, Iowa." (3. - p. 281).

*Anthus spinoletta* (Linn.) Water Pipit -- A " 'frequent migrant' " in Black Hawk County. (1. - p. 364).

*Bombicilla garrulus* (Linn.) Bohemian Waxwing -- Reported at LaPorte City on January 29, 1885. (3. - p. 231).

*Vireo griseus* (Boddaert) White-eyed Vireo -- Walters reported this vireo " 'rare (but) nests' " in Black Hawk County. (1. - p. 343).

*Vireo flavifrons* (Vieillot) Yellow-throated Vireo -- Migrated through LaPorte City, May 5, 1884. (3. - p. 235).

*Vireo solitarius* (Wils) Solitary Vireo -- Sighted at LaPorte City during migration on April 26, 1885. (3. - p. 239).

*Mniotilta varia* (Linn.) Black-and-white Warbler -- " 'Known to breed sparingly in Linn and Black Hawk Counties.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 344).

*Protonotaria citrea* (Boddaert) Prothonotary Warbler -- " 'It reaches to about its northern limit on the Iowa River in Johnson County, on the Cedar River in Black Hawk County (Peck), and the Des Moines River in Webster County (Somes).' " (1. - p. 345)

" 'A specimen in the museum of Iowa State Teachers' College was collected at Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, in 1925.' " (1. - p. 119).

*Vermivora chrysoptera* (Linn.) Golden-winged Warbler -- " 'A regular and uncommon migrant in Black Hawk County. It is said to breed in some localities in the state, but I have never found it in any part of Iowa during the nesting season.' " (1. - p. 348).

*Vermivora pinus* (Linn.) Blue-winged Warbler -- The Blue-winged Warbler is " 'common in migrations and breeds sparingly in Linn and Black Hawk Counties. (The) nest (is) on the ground in masses of fallen leaves.' " (1. - p. 347)

*Vermivora pevegrina* (Wilson) Tennessee Warbler -- " 'Morton E. Peck states that it is the noisiest of the warblers during migration, and does not usually appear until the leaves are out.' " (1. - p. 350).

*Dendroica tigrina* (Gmel.) Cape May Warbler -- " 'This species, once considered accidental in Black Hawk County, has in recent years become comparatively common.' " (1906) (1. - p. 351).

*Dendroica caerulescens* (Gmel.) Black-throated Blue Warbler -- A " 'rare transient.' " (Salisbury) This warbler is " 'quite rare, though probably a regular visitor in the migratory season.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 352).

*Dendroica coronata* (Linn.) Yellow-rumped Warbler -- "Morton E. Peck states that in migration the females usually appear several days before the males." (1. - p. 352).

*Dendroica pensylvanica* (Linn.) Chestnut-sided Warbler -- This warbler " 'breeds sparingly in Black Hawk, Linn, and Tama Counties.' " (1. - p. 353).

*Dendroica castanea* (Wils) Bay-breasted Warbler -- A " 'rare migrant' " in Black Hawk County. (Salisbury, Peck) (1. - p. 354).

*Dendroica striata* (Forster) Blackpoll Warbler -- "M. E. Peck says: 'No other warbler has so extreme a range of migrations -- its limits are the equator and the Arctic Ocean. Economically, the Blackpoll is the most important of the family. It arrives just when the trees are swarming with larvae, and its usefulness in destroying these can hardly be overestimated.'" (1. - p. 354, 1. - p. 62-53). The Blackpoll arrives at latitude 42 degrees 18' at " 'irregular and very early dates . . .,' " May 5 being a good example. (3. - p. 251).

*Dendroica pinus* (Wilson) Pine Warbler -- " 'A regular but not uncommon migrant in Black Hawk County.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 356).

*Dendroica discolor* (Vieill.) Prairie Warbler -- "Morton E. Peck writes, 'I once spent several hours trying to secure one of these birds while collecting in Linn County in 1896. While I did not succeed in taking it, I could not have been mistaken as to its identity, as I have observed the species in abundance in Southern Missouri.' " (1. - p. 397).

*Seiurus noveboracensis* (Gmel.) Northern Waterthrush -- "In Black Hawk County M. E. Peck gives it as an abundant migrant and quite common during the breeding season. Professor G. W. Walters reports it as an occasional migrant and nesting in Black Hawk (County).'" (1. - p. 398).

*Seiurus motacilla* (Vieilli) Louisiana Waterthrush -- In Black Hawk County it is an " 'abundant migrant' " but a " 'scarce summer resident.' " (1. - p. 359).

*Oporornis formosus* (Wilson) Kentucky Warbler -- Morton Peck reported that he has taken " 'one specimen at LaPorte City.' " (1. - p. 359).

*Oporornis agilis* (Wilson) Connecticut Warbler -- A " 'rare and shy' " warbler. " 'One specimen taken in Linn County and one or two others observed.' " (Peck). Professor Charles R. Keyes of Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, wrote that the specimen was " 'taken in the spring of 1896 by Morton E. Peck.' " (1. - p. 360).

*Oporornis philadelphia* (Wilson) Mourning Warbler -- The Mourning Warbler is a " 'migrant' " but seen " 'late in the season.' " (3. - p. 361).

*Geothlypis trichas* (Linn.) Yellowthroat -- The Yellowthroat arrived at LaPorte City in the spring migration of 1885 on May 8 and 9. (3. - p. 259)

*Icteria virens* (Linn.) Yellow-breasted Chat -- Arrived at latitude 42 degrees 18' (LaPorte City), May 10, 1884. (3. - p. 260)

*Wilsonia citrina* (Boddaert) Hooded Warbler -- " 'I have observed it once at LaPorte City, which is the most northerly record of its occurrence west of the Mississippi.' " (Peck) (1. - p. 362)

*Dolichonyx oryzivorus* (Linn.) Bobolink -- The Bobolink arrived at LaPorte City on May 5, 1884, during spring migration. (3. - p. 100)

*Sturnella neglecta* (Aud.) Western Meadowlark -- " 'In Black Hawk and Hardin Counties this form seems to be gradually crowding out the type of the species. Twenty years ago the Western Meadowlark was considered uncommon; at present they are largely in the majorities.' " (M. E. Peck) (1. - p. 303)

*Agelaius phoeniceus* (Linn.) Red-winged Blackbird -- Arrived at LaPorte City, Iowa, March 25, 1884. (3. - p. 163)

*Icterus spurius* (Linn.) Orchard Oriole -- In 1884 on "May 12 they came to LaPorte City." (3. - p. 169)

*Euphagus cyanocephalus* (Wagler) Brewer's Blackbird -- Arrived at LaPorte City, Iowa, March 20, 1885. (3. - p. 174)

*Richmondia cardinalis* (Linn.) Cardinal -- " 'Twenty years ago it was considered accidental in Black Hawk County, but at present it is frequently seen there.

especially in winter. No nest from that locality, however, has yet been recorded.' '' (Peck) (1. - p. 328)

*Pinicola enucleator* (Linn.) Pine Grosbeak -- " 'A rare autumn and spring visitor,' '' in Hardin County. (Peck) (1. - p. 308)

*Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (Linn.) Rufous-sided Towhee -- During the spring migration of 1884 it arrived at LaPorte City on March 27. (3. p. 212)

*Amnospiza caudacuta* (Allen) Sharp-tailed Sparrow -- "A specimen in the museum of Iowa State Teachers College was collected by G. W. Walters at Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, May 21, 1900' '' (4. p. 149)

*Chondestes grammacus* (Say) Lark Sparrow -- The Lark Sparrow arrived at LaPorte City during the spring migrations of 1885 on April 21. (3. - p. 193)

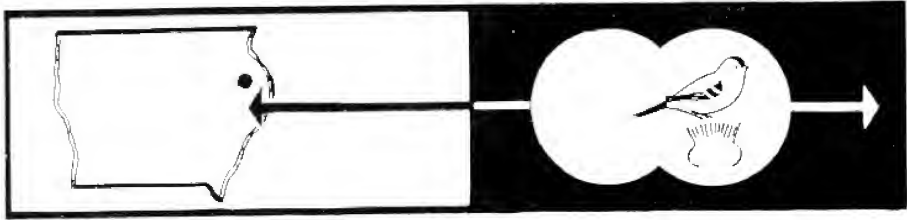
*Junco hyemalis* (Linn.) Dark-eyed Junco -- The Dark-eyed Junco, which is a winter bird in Iowa, was reported from LaPorte City on March 16, 1885. It departed for its northern summer range on April 10. (3 - p. 203)

*Spizella pusilla* (Wilson) Field Sparrow -- "Morton E. Peck says that the Field Sparrow is 'one of the few Iowa birds that seem to have become more abundant within the last twenty or thirty years.' '' (1. - p. 324)

*Calcarius pictus* (Swainson) Smith's Longspur -- "One in the museum at Iowa State Teachers College was taken by Harry Fields at Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, April 22, 1899." (4. - p. 153)

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## Birding Areas of Iowa, Dubuque and Nearby Counties

GEORGE CROSSLEY  
1890 Wood St.  
DUBUQUE

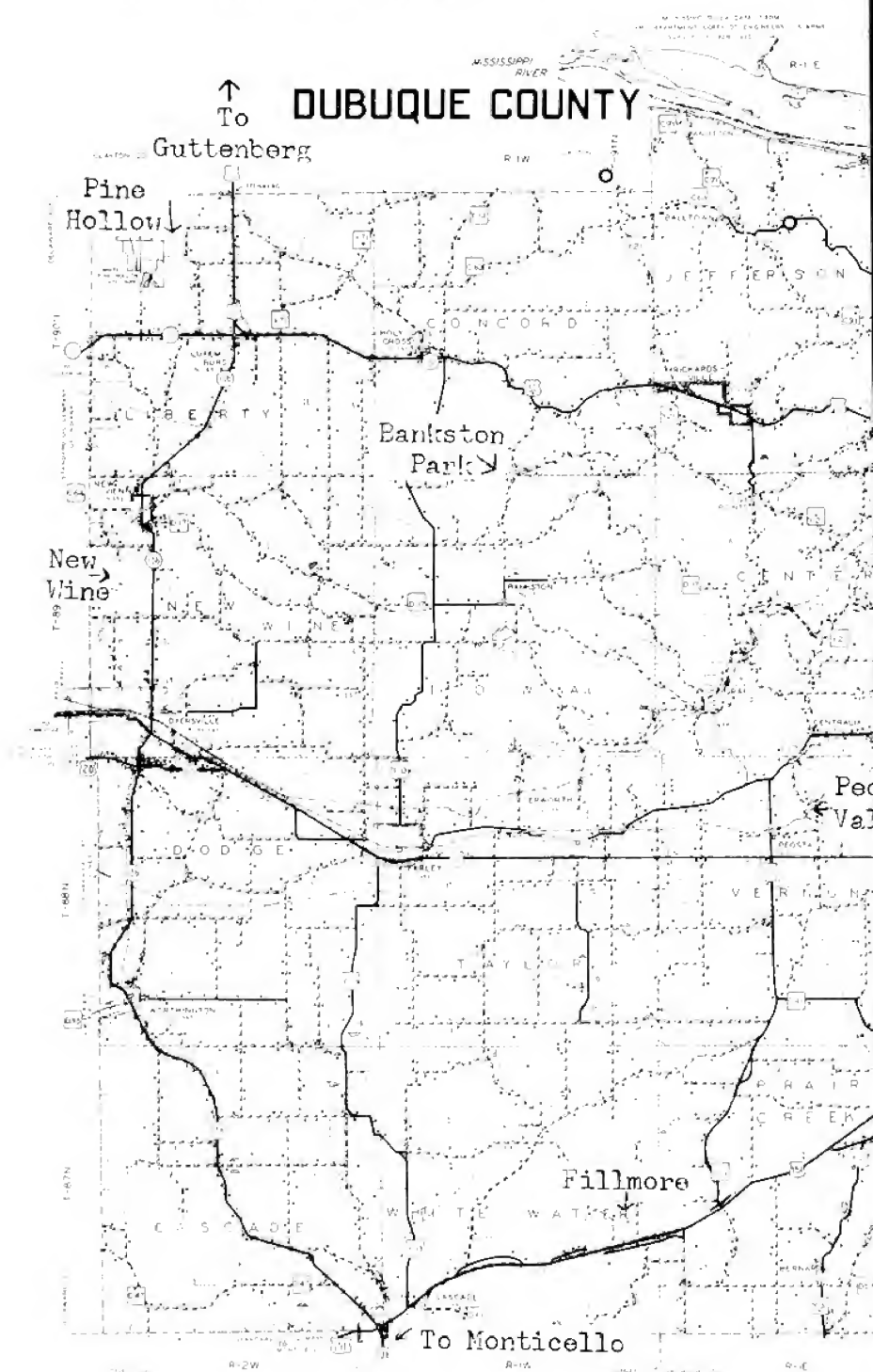
Dubuque County 1970 population: 90,609  
Average annual precipitation: 35.71 inches  
Normal mean annual temperature: 46.6 degrees  
Area covered by this report: 900 sq. miles (appr.)  
16 year average Christmas census record: 34 species  
Club: Dubuque Audubon Society

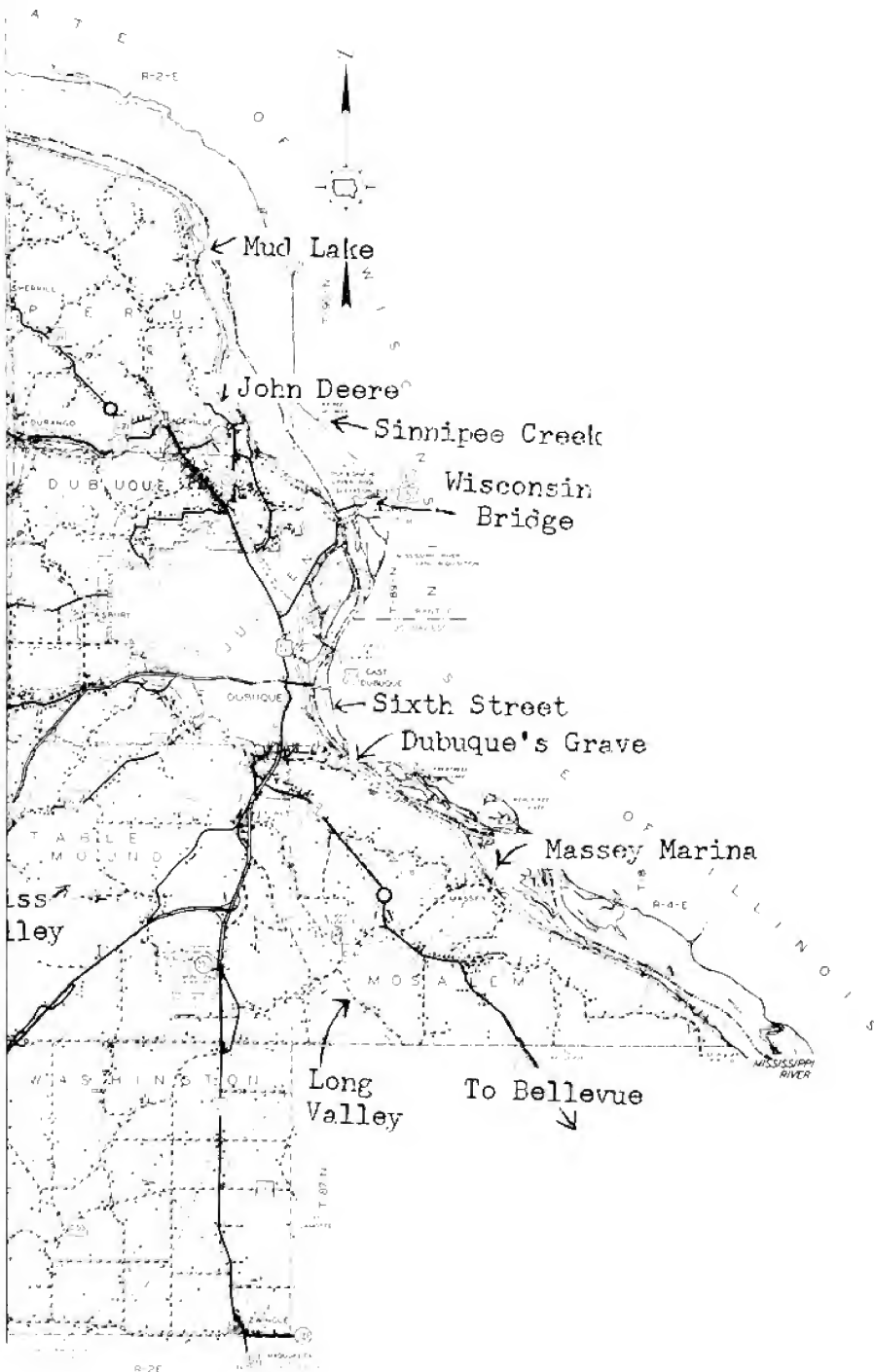
### Introduction

The Dubuque Bird Club was organized in 1928 by a nucleus of well-versed bird students. It has continued with regular programs and field trips down to the present time. Because of a couple of name changes and the organization of a Chapter of National Audubon Society, the Dubuque Audubon Society now has a membership of well over 100 conservation-minded individuals.

There are two principal physiographic features of Dubuque County. First, the Mississippi River with its accompanying rough terrain due to the many heavily-wooded ravines with small streams which flow into it. Second, the intensively-farmed prime agricultural land on the original prairie in the western sector. The areas described in this article which are found in neighboring counties of Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois have very similar topography. The streams which you should locate in order to pursue more satisfactory birding are the Maquoketa, Little Maquoketa, and Turkey Rivers; the Whitewater, Catfish, and Tetes des Mortes Creeks in Iowa; and the Platte River and Sinope Creek in Wisconsin. This territory lacks marsh, mudflats, lakes and evergreen habitats, hence shorebirds, marshbirds and finches may be difficult to find.

Wintering Bald Eagles may be one of our most interesting bird attractions. The best views of these will be obtained from the river bluffs in the city parks or from river banks near open water. Concentrations at Dubuque are not as large as at Cassville, Wisconsin or Bellevue, Iowa in certain winter seasons, but studies of their roosting and feeding habits are always exciting. Another feature of an unusual nature might be the annual hawk-watch held at the end of September or in early October by the Audubon Society at Nelson Dewey State Park, Wisc.





Dubuque County seems to lie very near the range boundary of several interesting species found here. For instance, it is near the northern breeding limits of the Mockingbird, Bell's Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, and Acadian Flycatcher, as well as near the southern breeding limit of Northern Waterthrush and Ruffed Grouse. The ranges of Eastern and Western Meadowlarks overlap but the species are somewhat segregated by the two types of terrain in the county. Other species which may be of particular interest to visitors, though they may be difficult to find or may be seen only on migration are the Prothonotary Warbler, Great and Snowy Egret, Bonaparte's Gull, Yellow-breasted Chat. Your reporter has logged approximately 248 species of birds in Dubuque County since 1943.

#### UPLAND AREAS

**Eagle Point Park.** This park in the northeast section of Dubuque occupies a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi River and Lock and Dam No. 11. It affords a beautiful view of the mile-wide river with wooded islands and Wisconsin bluffs in the distance. The bluff top provides good warbler viewing in the treetops below, as well as rafts of ducks on the river and gulls and eagles wheeling and feeding below the dam. The oak trees attract Red-headed Woodpeckers throughout the year.

**Linwood Cemetery.** In the northeast section of the city on Windsor Ave. This area has large trees, dense woods, some conifers, and a remnant of grass prairie. It is bordered on the north by Mt. Calvary Cemetery with a denser growth of conifers and which is surrounded by weedy gullies. These comprise our most dependable and accessible birding area for upland breeding species.

**Peosta Valley.** Go west from Dubuque on U. S. 20 about four miles, then right on pavement which goes past the Fairgrounds and continue through Centralia, then left on a narrow gravel road. This winds through a shallow valley with several springs where Common Snipe may be found during the winter. The valley is protected habitat for winter birding for meadowlark, Kingfishers, Woodpeckers, Mourning Doves, Winter Wrens, and hawks. Follow through interesting narrow railroad underpass where the stream runs beside you thence back to Dubuque.

**White Pine Hollow Forest Preserve.** Go three-fourths of a mile west and two miles north of Luxemburg in extreme northwest corner of Dubuque County; sign at foot entrance. Boundary fence does not completely border the area on the east side, so take your compass. Some 800 acres of heavy woods, deep canyons, rock cliffs, large springs, streams, and tall virgin pines. This area is unglaciated and supports many species of flora and fauna of a more northern latitude. Species of birds which nest here somewhat regularly are Northern Waterthrush, Kentucky, Cerulean, and Blue-winged Warblers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Acadian Flycatcher, Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, and Scarlet Tanager.

**Fillmore Park.** Maintained by Dubuque County Conservation Board, it is situated off U. S. highway 151 about 18 miles southwest of Dubuque. Has golf course and wooded hilly picnic and camping areas along Whitewater Creek.

**Swiss Valley County Park.** Drive seven miles west of Dubuque on U. S. 20 then south for three miles. Wooded park along spring-fed trout stream in wide deep valley. Very good warbler, sparrow, and land bird territory. Bluebirds are usually in the area across the road.

**Long Valley.** Travel about 6½ miles south on U. S. 52, right 1½ miles on blacktop, left on narrow dirt road winding through wide valley with stream fed by many watercress-choked springs. Common Snipe are usually found here in winter, also Killdeer, Pileated and the other woodpeckers, Kingfishers and Red-tailed Hawks. A delightful drive for birding from your car where springs emerge alongside the road.



**Bankston County Park.** Eighteen miles west of Dubuque on U. S. 52 then left two miles. This is in a wide deep valley with spring-fed trout stream flowing through, and surrounded by heavy woods. Picnic and camping areas.

**Pictured Rocks Maquoketa River Access - Jones County.** South out of Monticello on Iowa 38 about four miles; turn off to left at signs. This is a small park among tall trees with nearby wooded pastures. Provides good canoe entry in pretty rock-walled canyon. Turkey Vultures and Pileated Woodpeckers breed in this area.

#### RIVER AND MARSH AREAS

**East Sixteenth Street and City Island.** Although within the industrial section of the city, this area and that around the Shot Tower and Illinois Central Railroad Bridge at the end of Fourth Street offer some of our better winter duck concentrations. On East Sixteenth St. the flood retention basin is usually kept free of ice by warm discharges; the railroad bridge location likewise is ice-free. Gulls have usually migrated by Christmas. City Island on the extension of E. 16th St. is the site of our closed-out sanitary landfill. Although it is below flood stage, it has some swampy undergrowth, some large dead and dying elm trees, and a small riverside park. It now shelters our large winter Starling concentrations.

**John Deere Levee.** Go east on 32nd St., which changes into Peru Road, for about two miles, then right and continue across mainline railroad tracks to power plant water-intake structure. Park here and walk out on levee which extends for about one-half mile into the river. This is always productive for surface-feeding ducks in shallow water or on the mudflats depending on the river elevation. This is our only satisfactory shorebird territory with practically every shorebird species on the Iowa checklist possible. A spit beyond the end of the levee should be scanned for terns, Bonaparte's Gulls, White Pelicans, and geese. The main river channel is usually crowded with diving ducks in migration. Bring your scope!

**Mud Lake County Park.** Drive about five miles north on U. S. 52 and Iowa No. 3, then right at the Owl Furniture sign and right again for 2½ miles, then blind right fork at hilltop, then 1½ miles to the Mississippi River. Small area comprises shallow bay off the river, a cattail marsh, open river, a marina, camping and picnic areas. A very good all-around birding site for ducks, herons, egrets, swallows, sparrows, marsh wrens, Least Bittern, warblers, terns, and rails.

**Abel's Island Causeway - Guttenberg.** Located in Clayton County; follow river road north out of Guttenberg about two miles, and turn right across causeway which runs through a marsh on one side, and backwaters on the other. Birding success is determined by height of flood waters, as there may be many shorebirds on the low water mudflats or many species of ducks with higher water. Continue north another mile on the river road, taking the right fork up to higher ground overlooking extensive marshes and backwaters and the river channel in the distance. One may also walk the railroad tracks below; these follow the marshes more closely. A scope is needed!

**Green Island Fish and Wildlife Area - Jackson County.** Level open marsh with dikes and control structures at mouth of Maquoketa River. Also boat and canoe access to backwaters of the Mississippi. Should be good for ducks, geese, herons, owls, bitterns, sparrows, marsh wrens, and rails.

### MIXED HABITAT AREAS

**Massey Marina County Park.** Drive seven miles south on U. S. 52, left  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles on blacktop to Mississippi River. Small area allowing access to a "chute" of the river; however railroad tracks along here provide other good birding territory the year around. This is all good warbler area. Bald Eagles and Red-shouldered Hawks are available in winter, as are Pileated Woodpeckers. In the other seasons Wood Ducks and other ducks are possible.

**Dubuque's Grave Park.** Located on a bluff overlooking the confluence of Catfish Creek and the Mississippi south of the city, it is reached by Julien Dubuque Drive just east of the Grandview Avenue overpass. Many oak trees in this area which may be inspected from above from the park, or one may walk a trail along the creek. Good woodpecker and warbler territory; also eagles in winter and ducks during spring migration.

**Shoreacres Subdivision - East Dubuque.** Follow 6th Street as far as the marina. Park and walk from here south along the river. This area floods when the river is high, but has wooded backwater lakes, many large river maples, and small undergrowth. This is one of our better spring birding areas for thrushes, warblers, land birds, ducks, herons, Pileated and other woodpeckers; White Pelicans have been seen here. There is a winter duck-feeding operation along 6th Street with the water kept open by aeration. There may be as many as 300 Mallards with several other species of ducks.

**Wisconsin Highway Bridge and Causeway.** By crossing this bridge into Wisconsin, the birder has a very productive habitat opened to him. The open river on the north side of the road is always crowded with ducks, mergansers, Coots, and gulls during migration. By walking onto the wooded islands or peninsulas south of the road which extend for over a mile and cover some 500 acres, one may find many woodpeckers, sparrows, Wood Ducks, herons, or Bald Eagles according to the season. By driving further and walking the railroad tracks south and scouting the backwaters, one finds unusually good warbler and land bird territory. Listen for Prothonotary Warblers!

**Potosi River Access - Wisconsin.** Turn off U. S. 61 to Potosi and go straight through town to the river. One park is on a peninsula in the river via a viaduct under railroad tracks; another park is two miles south along the river and affords camping, boating, fishing, and good water bird and hawk observations. A hawk watch is held here about the first weekend in October; most species of migrating hawks, eagles and Osprey are seen. The bluff a little distance from the river is the vantage point where the birds pass over at treetop height.

**Nelson Dewey State Park - Cassville, Wisconsin.** The attraction at Cassville is the concentration of Bald Eagles which usually winter here because the river is kept ice-free by the discharge from two steam power plants. There are accesses at the power plants where one may approach close to the birds perching in trees or flying low over the water watching for and diving for fish.

Nelson Dewey affords an excellent high vantage point to survey the river, the wooded flood plain, and backwaters for eagles or a Great Blue Heron rookery. We believe this is one of the better hawk migration lookouts in the Midwest. A few miles north of the park is the narrow, deep, wooded valley that Eagle Valley Environmentalists, Inc. are purchasing as a sanctuary for a winter nighttime eagle roosting area.

**Bellevue State Park - Jackson County.** There are two sections to this park. The original area is just south outside of Bellevue on a high bluff which affords beautiful views of the town, lock and dam, and river. Some winters one may discover many Bald Eagles roosting in trees or wheeling and diving for fish near

the dam. The new section, Dyas Unit, is a couple miles farther south on a bluff but farther from the river. The campground is here.

**Worthington Sportsmen's Park - Delaware County.** Four miles west of Dyersville on U. S. 20, then south on County X47 about four miles to this spring-fed lake of about 10 acres, surrounded by some good marsh, some wet grassland and sandridges. There are always some ducks, together with possible Le Conte's, Savannah, Song, and Grasshopper Sparrows, Bobolink, Upland Sandpiper, marsh wrens, Short-eared Owl, and bitterns nesting or in migration.

#### FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

The areas located and described above are mainly public tracts and river accesses. Although while driving the country roads of the area one may notice numerous favorable habitats, the birder should be careful to secure permission before entering on private property. As noted in several area descriptions, railroad rights-of-way along either bank of the Mississippi River or up Catfish Creek or Little Maquoketa River furnish access and good viewing.

Personal favored spots nearby for a quick review of current bird activity are Linwood Cemetery, East Dubuque 6th Street, John Deere Levee, and Mud Lake County Park.

The Ham House Museum on Shiras Avenue near Eagle Point Park has a few bird skins and much memorabilia of early Dubuque. Carnegie-Stout Public Library at 11th and Bluff Streets has some good bird books for study or pleasure. Check here for names of officers of Dubuque Audubon Society to determine dates and times of their activities.

Directions for reaching the listed areas are included in the text. However the accompanying map may be useful to the visitor in locating places nearest to his general route or in plotting a course between his favored habitats. All areas listed in other counties may be reached within a 45 minute to one hour drive.

## FIELD REPORTS



### Fall Migration

September, with normal temperatures, was very wet with 7 inches of rain recorded at the Des Moines Airport. October was a warm month with considerable rain in the early part. The first half of November was cool and dry on the average, although a record high of 70 degrees at Des Moines was experienced on the 14th.

What warbler migration occurred seemed to have taken place on the rainy week-ends with conditions making identifications virtually impossible except for the mist-netters. Waterfowl have been relatively few compared with other years; whether they were merely late remains to be seen. Migrant sparrows have also seemed fewer than usual.

**Loons, Grebes, Pelicans, Cormorants.** A Common Loon on 30 October at Red Rock was only the second recorded there (GB). A Horned Grebe was seen on 4 November at Credit Island (PP), and 2 at Cedar Rapids on the 11th (LS). Two reports of White Pelicans: 18 October, 12 at Forneys Lake (RP), and 100 at DeSoto Bend on the 20th (SB). The largest concentration of Double-crested Cormorants

was 234 plus on 28 October at Red Rock (GB), with 15 at Clinton on the 27th and one at Sabula on 24 November (PP), and 3 on the 18th at Forneys Lake (RP).

**Hérons, Bitterns.** Great Blue Herons peaked at 238 in September, with 30-40 remaining after the early October flooding (GB). Flocks were also reported (FK, PP), with 12 still near Wapello 10 Nov. Six immature Little Blue Herons were at Red Rock through August to 8 September (GB). A lone Cattle Egret stayed from 23 September to 3 October (GB). There were 105 Great Egrets on 22 September, but only 2 after the flooding (GB). Night Herons were apparently few with only two mentions of Black-crowned, as many as 4 and 5 in September (GB), and 1 imm. on 15 September (RH), with no Yellow-crowned reported. American Bitterns were seen twice; 12 on 26 September by John Beamer (fide GB), and 1 on 10 November at Mark Twain Ref. (PP). A Least Bittern was seen on 26 September near Des Moines (WC).

**Swans, Geese, Ducks.** There were 6 Whistling Swans at L & D 9 on 10 November (DK). The first 185 Canada Geese came on 19 September, but numbers haven't exceeded 200 which compares with 4,000 in 1970 (GB). Mark Twain Ref. had 600 on 10 November (PP). Snow Geese numbering a thousand were present on 17 October, with only 200 remaining on 22 October. By 5 November there were 400 compared with 12 M three years ago (GB). On 10 November there were 300 at Mark Twain (PP). Large flocks were seen 18 November (RP). There were a few teal in late August, but no others until 10 November (FK). Ducks are generally down with 8,000 Mallards on 5 November although there have been 40-70 thousand in other years (GB). A Black Duck was seen on 29 September (WC), and 4 at Mark Twain on 10 November (PP). An aerial count at Mark Twain on 9 November showed 21,000 Mallards (Gerald Gill, fide PP). A Canvasback was present at the Des Moines Res. on 6 November (DM) with 20 at Mark Twain on the 10th (PP) and 85,000 in Pool 19 between Keokuk and Fort Madison 18 November according to Larry Stone. There were 20 Common Mergansers and 1 Hooded at the latter place on the same day (PP).

**Vultures, Hawks.** Turkey Vultures peaked at 160 on 6 October, with the last 8 seen on the 20th (GB). A Goshawk was shot on 7 November while attempting to take a farm duck near Cedar Falls, with another seen on the 10th near Bristow (MK). Seven Sharp-shinned were banded in September and October (PP). Red-tailed have been numerous (RP). None of the usual big Broad-winged flights were seen (RH, PK). A dark phase Swainson's was seen on 10 November (RP). Mrs. Jean Broley reports the sighting of a flock of 7 Ferruginous Hawks on 28 October. These were in a field and one was observed at extremely close range. This one was extremely light in color on the undersides and head, with pinkish touches on the shoulders and tail, and rusty feathers on the legs. The tail was unbanded. The Fitzhugh Diggs also are reported to have had a Ferruginous for a few weeks in their area. (Jean Broley, fide RP). An immature Golden Eagle was seen on 2 November (RP). Bald Eagles reported: first imm. on 28 September, and adult a month later with 5 seen on 10 November (GB). On the same date there were 3 at Mark Twain (PP) and 8 at L & D 9 (DK). Marsh Hawks were scarce (GB), but 3 were seen on 4 November (GH). An Osprey on 8 September was rather early (fide RH). On 22 September, 3 Peregrines were seen harassing a Great Blue Heron. It is possible there were as many as 5 in the Refuge (GB). The largest number of Kestrels seen was 11 on 27 September (GB). They were numerous in October (RP).

**Shorebirds.** A Virginia Rail was on the Coe campus on 5 October (LS). On 18 October 100 American Coots were seen south of Council Bluffs (RP), but they were few (FK, WHB). From one to 6 Semipalmated Plover were seen daily for five

weeks in September and October, but only one Piping Plover, that on 8 September. Golden Plover in flocks of 50 to 139 were seen each week from August to the third week in October, while Black-bellied Plover numbers ranged from 9 to 35 (GB). On 13 November, 2 Black-bellied were seen on 13 November (DM). Ruddy Turnstones were present during five weeks in August and September with as many as 5 seen. The last were seen on the late date 29 September (GB). American Woodcock were migrating from 15 to 30 October (PP), and one was seen near Paris on 21 October (LS). Common Snipe were few with 1 to 7 seen daily (GB), and only 2 or 3 at Des Moines. A flock of 40 Pectorals was noted on 23 September (WC). From 1 to 26 Baird's were seen daily during the last week of August and through two weeks of October. Least Sandpipers peaked at 150 on 21 October with the last 2 on the 28th. Dunlin were seen only during the last three weeks of October with a count of 16 to 53. Dowitchers numbering from 8 to 23 were present all of August through the second week of October, and Stilt Sandpipers in groups of from 17 to an estimated 150 were also present (GB). A Western Sandpiper was observed on 27 September (WC). During the same August-October period there were from 5 to 52 Buff-breasted Sandpipers feeding in the short grass at Red Rock, a late Marbled Godwit was seen on 22-23 September, a high of 23 Sanderlings were counted, and a flock of 13 American Avocets was seen on 14 October (GB). A Northern Phalarope was seen on 8 and 15 September (GB). Most sightings listed as (GB) also seen by (WC).

**Gulls, Terns.** The only report on Franklin's Gull noted that none was seen until 18 October (PK). Bonaparte's only mention referred to an individual seen for four weeks in September and October (GB). A few Forster's Terns were seen during the same period, as were Common Terns, one on 8 September, 9 on the 22nd, 2 on 4 October and 4 on the 13th, the two latter dates being exceptionally late (GB). Caspian Terns were reported from several areas (FK, DK, GB, LS).

**Owls, Whip-poor-wills, Hummingbirds, Woodpeckers.** The rare Barn Owl was sighted on 27 September (fide FK). A Snowy Owl was seen near Dows, Wright Co. on 19 Nov. by Dean Roosa. A mild invasion of Short-eared Owls is implied: 6-8 on 9 November (EA); 4 in the west end of the county (FK); common in LeClaire area (PP); and 2 seen several times near Essex (BW). Seven Saw-whets were banded (PP). A late Whip-poor-will on 20 October was one of 4 banded (PP). A rather late hummingbird was seen on 30 September (PK). A strong flight of Common Flickers was noted on 23 September (GB).

**Flycatchers.** Numerous E. Kingbirds were seen migrating on 3 September (GB). A. W. Kingbird was at the Des Moines Res. on 18 September (WC). The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is considered the commonest Empidonax this fall with 41 banded, the last on the late date 4 October (PP). The E. Wood Pewee is scarce again (PK), rather late dates were 27 September (DeL) and 10 October (PP). Olive-sided Flycatchers were seen on three September dates (GB) while 2 were calling on the late date 22 September (RH).

**Swallows, Wrens, Mimics, Thrushes.** Swallows left early with Cliff the most numerous after Barn Swallows (PK). Cliff Swallows nested under several bridges near Red Rock and hundreds moved out in late August. A mixed flock of several hundred was seen at the dam on 16 September (GB). A flock of 750 Purple Martins was present for several weeks in August and September (DeL), but there were several hundred fewer than usual (DH). Winter Wrens were seen on 2 and 17 October (PK), 6 October (GB), and 21 were banded between 21 September and 1 November (PP). Carolina Wrens were observed on 21 and 26 October (LS), and one has been seen and heard at intervals in Des Moines. A very late Long-billed Marsh Wren was banded on 22 October, and the Short-billed has been common all

during September (PP). A Gray Catbird seen on 13 September was later than usual (DH), while one observed on 28 October was later found dead on 6 November (LS). Late Brown Thrashers have been noted (PK, PP, BW). A large movement of American Robins was noted on 9 and 10 November (MS). Rather late Wood Thrushes and Swainson's Thrushes were seen on 4 and 15 October respectively (PP).

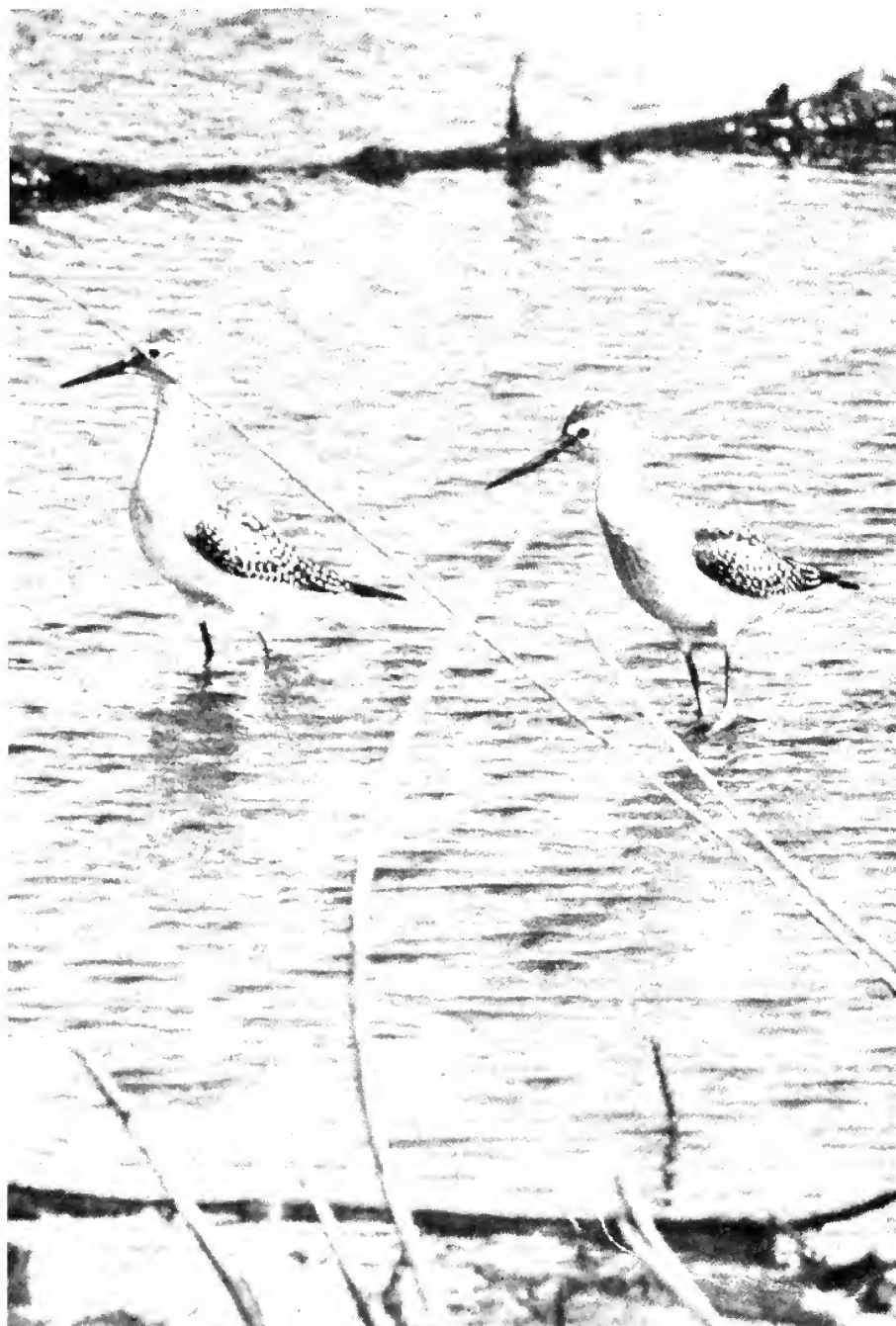
**Kinglets, Pipits, Shrikes.** There were many Golden-crowned Kinglets on 29 October (DeL). From 7 to 30 Water Pipits were seen on four dates in October (GB). A Northern Shrike was well seen on 27 and 28 October (GB).

**Vireos, Warblers.** Two very late Solitary Vireos were on 31 October, banded (PP), and 1 November (DK). An early Philadelphia Vireo date was 15 August (DeL). Few warblers were seen other than Yellow-rumped in October (GB). A few of the commoner varieties were seen in the last week in September (FK). A small wave was noted on 11 October (DH), and good movements took place in October (PP). Tennessee were fewer (PK). A late Orange-crowned was banded on 26 October (PP). Tennessee were fewer (PK). A late Orange-crowned was banded on 26 October (PP). This species was scarce but may have been missed due to the rain (DeL). Nashvilles were fewer (PK), but many were banded (DeL), with a rather late one on 27 October (PP). Late Magnolias were one on 13 October (PP) and one on 29 October (DeL). The rare Black-throated Blue was banded on the very late date 7 October; Chestnut-sided and Blackpoll on 4 October were also late (PP). Many Mourning Warblers were present in early September with 5 banded (DeL). A new early date for the Connecticut was 20 August (MEW). More Canada than usual were seen (PK). An American Redstart on 4 October was late (PP).

**Blackbirds, Finches.** Rusty Blackbirds were numerous (RP), and a huge flock was seen on 9 November with 7 banded (DeL). There was a wave of sparrows (GB), and a generally good movement (PP), but no fall sparrows (FK) and relatively few other than White-throated at Des Moines. A rather late Indigo Bunting was banded on 15 October (PP). There has been a small flock of Purple Finches since 2 November (DH), and 4 seen on 20 October (GB), but few in Polk Co. A good influx of Pine Siskins was noted (PP); 25 were seen on 27 October (GB) and 2 were noted on the rather early date 22 September (RH). American Goldfinches on 28 October numbered about 100 (GB). Red Crossbills have been frequent from 15 October on (PP), and a flock of 20 appeared on 5 November with varying smaller numbers seen since (LW). White-winged Crossbills in a flock of 20 were first seen on 13 November (DH). LeConte's Sparrows were seen: 3 on 20 October and 1 on the 27th (GB), and 1 on 6 October (MB, MEW). Tree Sparrows are more numerous than usual (RP). No Harris' Sparrows were seen (DeL), but they were thought more than last year (PP). One White-crowned was banded (BW). Only 1 or 2 White-throated have been seen (FK), but a good migration was noted (PP, DeL). Fox Sparrows were thought numerous (RP, DeL). A flock of 15 Snow Buntings was seen on 22 November (NH).

Contributors: Eugene Armstrong, Mrs. Gladys Black, Mrs. Margaret Brooke, Stuart Burns, Wm. Criswell, Mrs. Genevieve DeLong, Dr. Nicholas Halmi, Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Mrs. Gladys Haskell, Russell Hays, Fred Kent, Pearl Knoop, Darwin Koenig, Morton Konig, Dick Mooney, Peter Petersen, Mrs. Ruth Phipps, Lillian Serbousek, Mrs. Marie Spears, Betty Walters, Mrs. Lurene Wartens, Mary Ellen Wartens.

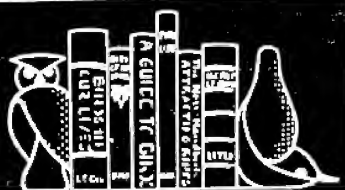
Notes on the winter season should be submitted by 20 February. Woodward H. Brown, 432 Tonawanda Dr., Des Moines, 50312.



Lesser Yellowlegs at Coralville Reservoir  
Photo by Phillip Pollock,  
Museum of History & Science, Waterloo



## BOOK REVIEWS



**A Field Guide to Mexican Birds and Adjacent Central America** -- Roger Tory Peterson and Edward L. Chalif -- Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston -- 320 p. plus 48 color plates, 4 line drawings and 3 maps -- 1973 -- \$8.95

The long awaited Peterson Guide for Mexico is finally a reality and it is well worth the wait. The book covers 1038 species, even including accidentals and casuals for Mexico, Guatemala, British Honduras (Belize) and El Salvador. As would be expected the number of species for the other Central American countries decreases as one goes south with just over 56 percent coverage for Panama. A major problem with another recent Central American guide by Irby Davis (see IBL Vol. 42 p. 52-53) was the choice of common names. This guide was proofed by Eugene Eisenmann, the leading expert on the nomenclature of Central American birds, so the names used are the latest word. The text is in the usual Peterson format, including field marks, similar species, voice, range and habitat. The identification information for species found in more northerly areas is capsulized to conserve space, but one is referred to one of the three Peterson guides for U. S. areas. As would be expected these species are not illustrated.

The plates are certainly up to if not surpassing the high level we have come to expect from Roger Tory Peterson. During the twenty-five years this book has been in production both Sutton and Eckelberry were scheduled to share the load of the illustration work with Peterson. Problems arose and the result was Peterson painted all the plates personally. One is surprised at the large size of the birds in the illustrations. The plates are all located in the center of the book and are on coated paper while the remainder of the book is on uncoated stock. All species this viewer is familiar with are very well depicted. Everything considered, this guide is an absolute must for anyone visiting Mexico. ed.

**Adventures in Birding - Confessions of a Lister** -- Jean Piatt -- Alfred A. Knopf, New York -- 268 p., several line drawings -- 1973 -- \$7.95.

To anyone who is an avid life lister this reads like a top-flight adventure story. The author and his wife, at the time of writing, ranked fourteenth in terms of life lists of North American birds with 671 species each. They may have lost ground with the April 1973 checklist revision, but then everyone else did also. The couple has pursued their hobby vigorously for about fifteen years, chiefly on their vacations, his occupation being Professor of Anatomy in the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. The neophyte lister will get a good insight into the many aspects of this "sporting" side of ornithology. It can result in the gain of scientific knowledge as well as being great fun despite occasional incorrect common names. The author also erred in the name of the chairman of the A. O. U. Checklist Committee. So if you want to see what you are getting yourself in for by becoming a bird lister, read Jean Piatt's book and find out. ed.



**Autumn of the Eagle** - George Laycock -- Charles Scribner's Sons -- New York 240 pages, photographs -- 1973 -- \$6.95.

At long last, a complete book on the Bald Eagle. This very readable book deals with the eagles past and its threatened future. The fifteen chapters are worthy of being named in this review -- the National Bird, the vanishing wilderness, the eagle family, the eyrie, the eagles of Vermilion, a matter of diet, the champion bander, danger in the sky, the chemical age, a search for eagles, intolerance and poison, shotguns and helicopters, land of many eagles, first aid and deep concern, and What of the Future? As these titles suggest this book carries us back into the past and projects us into this age of concern for our environment. What is happening to our National Bird should cause concern for all of mankind.

This timely book reviews all the going projects and studies of the eagle, and brings to the public attention these studies and projects. One criticism, and its a personal one, concerns the chapter a search for eagles. In the lead paragraph he quotes my data on three Christmas counts when it should be an all winter study in the Christmas Count area. These three counts showed a declining ratio of immature eagles. On page 152, telling about the three January counts, 1961, 62 and 63 when about 3700 eagles were found each year, the immatures were falling from 26.5 percent to 23.7 percent to 21.6 percent. These immatures figures were credited to me "A Survey of Wintering Bald Eagles" *Iowa Bird Life*, XXX No. 3 p. 56. This has to be an error. I do have the official Audubon counts for 1962 and 63. The immatures were 24 percent and 22 percent. These were given me in 1965. The quoted figures might be a refinement and correction. It is possible that the quote credited to me were for the three year Mississippi River counts. The immatures were 22 percent, 20 percent and 23.4 percent. These were February counts. Sandy Sprunt conducted a January count for these same years. His immatures were 20 percent, 11 percent and 24 percent. The middle year was very foggy and many young were overlooked. In 1963 I found 868 eagles and Sprunt found 885. The book is well documented and agrees with data that I have collected over the years. Some recent data showing an improved percentage of immatures was not used. The chart in the chapter "The Chemical Age" shows Wisconsin eagles were second to only Alaska having less DDE in eggs and more average young per nest. This might explain the increasing percentage of immature in my counts over the past several years. For any one interested in eagles, poison chemicals, and environmental changes this book is a must. Elton Fawks.

**The Red Gods Call** -- Paul Errington -- Iowa State University Press, Ames -- 171 p. 20 photographs -- 1973 -- \$5.95

This book is an autobiography of Iowa State's internationally famous muskrat researcher which covers his boyhood experiences hunting, fishing, trapping and observing wildlife. The title came originally from a poem by Kipling titled "The Feet of Young Men", but Errington first saw reference to the Red Gods as the caption of a photograph relating to the outdoors. Errington spent thirteen winters trapping, from 1915-1928. It provided the financial basis for him to attend college and prepared him for a lifetime of research and teaching unlike any of his predecessors. His accounts of his adventures in the outdoors provide interesting reading and give us a good insight into one of the top wild life researchers. Hopefully it will inspire many young men with a keen interest in the outdoors to pursue a career in wildlife management. ed.

**Game Birds of North America** -- Leonard Lee Rue -- Harper and Row, New York -- 490 p., 25 color plates, 25 drawings, 75 photographs, 25 maps -- 1973 -- \$12.50.

Another popular type book aimed chiefly at the hunter. It provides background information about waterfowl, upland (gallinaceous) birds, marsh birds, two shorebirds and four "nuisance" birds. A major error is the consideration of the Great Horned Owl as a nuisance bird. The author gives a fairly good case in defense of predators in the text of this fine owl, but merely including it in this category will be condemnation enough for many hunters. The fact that this bird is protected in many states is not mentioned. The species accounts provide description, distribution, communication, breeding, flight, migration, habits, food, life span, enemies, and palatability for each of the seventy-five species covered. Several incorrect common names are used, most notable is "American" for Common Merganser. It is regrettable that the author was not more careful in presenting information to hunters in what is represented as being an "authoritative reference". ed.

**The Naturalists Directory, International**, 41st edition, September, 1973 supplement -- P. C. L. Publications, Inc. South Orange, N. J. -- 58 p. -- 1973 -- paperbound -- \$2.00.

The directory contains names, addresses, specialty or discipline, and buy, sell, exchange, collect and correspond information on over 3,500 naturalists. Also included is a listing of museums, zoos, societies, publications and periodicals in the field of natural science. This supplement updates the 41st edition, published in April, 1972. Anyone interested in knowing of others of similar interests can find their name and address in this well indexed publication. ed.

**Birding from a Tractor Seat** -- Charles T. Flagum -- Published by the author, Box 30038, St. Paul -- 435 p. 20 line drawings by W. J. Breckenridge -- 1973 -- \$8.95.

A collection of personal essays originally written as a monthly column for the **Community Magazine** of Albert Lea, Minnesota. The author was born and raised in the vicinity of Thompson, Iowa. He went to the University of Minnesota and has spent the remainder of his life farming in southern Minnesota. Most of the chapters (each chapter is one column and the book contains all 137 columns written by the author) deal with a particular species, usually a common bird. The nomenclature is of the period when the columns were written, the 1950's and early 1960's, a point which might confuse readers, but each chapter does list the month of original publication. Some names are incorrect for even the current usage of the time written. Also the cover illustration is listed as being a Red-tailed Hawk but looks like a Swainson's Hawk. As a whole the book is well written and should make interesting reading for Iowans as the subject matter pertains specifically to Iowa and Minnesota. ed.

**The Cactus Wren** -- Anders H. Anderson and Anne Anderson -- University of Arizona Press, Tucson -- 236 p., 48 illustrations, 41 tables -- 1973 -- paperbound, \$4.95, cloth, \$7.50.

A good life history study of a previously poorly known desert species. The authors provide a balanced coverage; even discussing in detail the relationship with the Curve-billed Thrasher. The book is the result of nearly ten years of intensive study of these wrens, Arizona's state bird. The photographs, charts and tables greatly enhance the text. The approach to this life history is from an ecological standpoint somewhat unique in this type of book. ed.

**The Sea and the Ice - A Naturalist in Antarctica** -- Louis J. Halle -- Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston -- 286 p., 28 photographs, 2 maps -- 1973 -- \$8.95

This book provides an account of the author's trip to the Antarctic during the southern summer of 1970-71. If you are familiar with Halles writing you know it goes far beyond merely a routine narrative account. He traveled by boat from New Zealand via Campbell Island to McMurdo. The birds frequently encountered include albatross, penguins and skuas. Seals and whales are also covered in some detail. The photographs, brought together from many sources, are all excellent and do much to enhance the text. Appendices deal with the Coriolis effect, the Rogal Albatrosses of Taiaroa, New Zealand and the full text of the Antarctic Treaty to preserve and conserve the living resources in Antarctica. The book contains some historic references to journeys of exploration and general physical and geologic descriptions of the continent. Both the naturalist and the armchair explorer will find the book of interest. ed.

**The View from Hawk Mountain** -- Michael Harwood -- Charles Scribner's Sons, New York -- 191 p. several line drawings -- 1973 -- \$6.95.

This well written book serves to update **Hawks Aloft**, Maurice Broun's original chronic of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. Harwood writes perhaps more objectively as he was not as deeply involved with the establishment of the sanctuary as was Broun. He recounts the inane hawk shooting activities of the local citizens and the struggle to gain some measure of protection for the birds. Hawk Mountain has become the outstanding hawk migration watching station in the United States. Middlewesterners should remember that Duluth has larger numbers of birds and fewer people, it is also much closer. One cannot argue that Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and the people who built and maintain it has done more for the conservation of hawks than any other place in the country. Harwood's book tells it's story well and provides insights into other aspects of hawks as well. ed.

**Man in a Cage** -- Robert Elgin -- Iowa State University Press, Ames -- 122 p., 20 photographs -- 1972 -- paperbound -- \$4.95.

This book is the story of the Des Moines Children's Zoo as told by its colorful director, Robert Elgin. Some I. O. U. members may recall the banquet program he presented at our Ottumwa convention in 1961. An experienced falconer, Elgin assumed the zoo directorship in 1967. He brought with him experience as a writer and public relations man. The accounts of his many experiences at the zoo makes for interesting reading and the book also offers an insight into the many problems a zoo faces. For a deeper insight into Iowa's largest zoo, Robert Elgin's book is a must. ed.

**Impressions of the Big Thicket** -- William A. Owens, paintings by Michael Frary -- University of Texas Press, Austin -- 112 p., 36 color and 36 black and white plates, 12 marginal illustrations and one map -- 1973 -- \$17.50.

The Big Thicket of East Texas gained some prominence several years ago in birding circles when Ivory-billed Woodpeckers were reported in the area. The woodpeckers have not proven easy to locate in the area, if indeed they were there. The Big Thicket is a fine natural area, a combination of several ecological zones and a meeting point for species from all geographic directions. This book combines Dr. Owens prose impression with the rather impressionistic paintings of Dr. Frary. The combination is a unique presentation of a unique area. ed.

**The Wind Birds** -- Peter Matthiessen with drawings by Robert Gillmor -- The Viking Press, New York -- 160 p., 25 line drawings -- 1973 -- \$9.95.

The text is a revised version of the text of **The Shorebirds of North America**, 1967. The outstanding feature of the earlier book was certainly the color plates. This version permits Matthiessen's fine text to gain the spotlight. The drawings by Gillmor, while not on a par with the color work of Clem in the earlier book, are none-the-less well done and round out the book nicely. The text rambles through the species of North American shorebirds giving some interesting information on their life histories. It is written in a fine prose and is complete with a bibliography and detailed index. It is certainly to be recommended for anyone who does not have the earlier edition and enjoys shorebirds. ed.

**Birds of the Bahamas** -- Andrew Paterson -- Durrell Publications, Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vt. -- 180 p., 100 black and white drawings and one map -- 1972 -- \$6.00.

An introduction to the birds of the Bahamas, seemingly aimed at the novice birder or vacationer with a casual interest in birds. The book is restricted to 100 species, apparently the commonest birds of approximately 280 recorded for the islands. The entire list for the islands is given at the end of the book, but regrettably it lacks scientific names. Both North American (A.O.U.) and European common names are included but not, of course, the latest revision of A. O. U. names. The text gives the general relationships for each species, field marks, habits, call, local names, and status on the islands. The illustrations are small and frequently much space is wasted with their layout. Few are good enough to permit adequate identification so a field guide is also needed.

The book doesn't have much merit. The text might help one determine which of several similar species he has seen, but the chance the bird has not been included makes this premise shaky. It cannot be recommended for any readership. ed.

**A Bibliography of Arizona Ornithology, Annotated** -- Anders H. Anderson -- University of Arizona Press, Tucson -- 241 p. -- 1972 -- paperbound \$7.95.

A book which is very well described by its title. The bibliography is divided into the following categories: nomenclature and taxonomy, distribution and migration, paleontology and archaeology, morphology and physiology, ecology, diseases and parasites, game management and conservation, theses and dissertation, miscellaneous and semi-popular. Mimeographed local bird club newsletters, park bird lists and newspaper articles are not considered. It is well organized and should provide students of Arizona birds with many sources of information. ed.

## Payment of 1974 Dues

For those who have not already paid their dues for 1974, it is time to mail them now to the Treasurer, Mrs. Ruth Buckles, 5612 Urbandale Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Regular Member \$4.00 a year, Supporting Member \$5.00 a year, Contributing Member \$10.00 a year, Junior Member (under 16 years of age) \$1.00 a year, Life Member \$100.00, which may be paid in four annual payments of \$25.00.